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A HISTORY

OF THE

TOWN OF FAIR HAVEN,

VERMONT.

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IN THREE PARTS.

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BY ANDREW N. ADAMS.



FAIR HAVEN:

LEONARD & PHELPS, PRINTERS.

1870.

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ker, of Watertown, Conn., and a few acres to Col. Lyon and Col. David Erwin. He sold the remaining 50 acres of the north part—the fourth division of the right of Ralph Watson—"excepting the house standing on the same," January 3d, 1794, to Col. David Erwin, bounding it as follows: Beginning at an elm tree in the southeast corner of the fourth division lot of Isaac Clark, thence running north 22 rods, thence east 60 rods to Richard Beddow's land, thence south on Beddow's west line 136 rods, thence west to the highway, and then north to the place of beginning.

Mr. Meacham appears to have been an acquaintance and friend of Col. Lyon in Massachusetts, and he is said to have worked with Richard Beddow at nail-making in a shop which stood on the side hill east of Mr. Kidder's barns. He was a poor man and had a large family, which necessitated assistance from the town and the apprenticeship of his eldest son, John, afterwards a merchant in the town, and later an influential citizen of Castleton, by the authorities of the town, during his minority. Mr. Meacham was one of the members of the first board of selectmen chosen at the organization of the town in August, 1783, and was one of a committee chosen by the citizens in September, 1784, to draw up a remonstrance against the doings of a county convention. He removed from Fair Haven to Galway, N. Y., in 1794, and thence to Benson in 1800, where he carried on a brick yard, and was so injured by the caving in of earth which he was engaged in excavating that he survived but one week, and died in 1808 or 1809, aged 58 years.

Mr. Ballard's place of settlement laid next west of Mr. Meacham's, and consisted of 177 acres, besides some 60 acres bought by him at auction on the fourth division of Stephen Fay's right, and lying further to the west. The first 100 acres were laid out to him in August, 1781, on two fourth division rights purchased of Col. Clark in June, as follows: 45 acres in a square on Col. Clark's own right, the southeast corner being a noted elm tree in Meacham's west line; and 55 acres in a 45 rod wide strip, running west 219 rods to the river. The 77 acres were laid out in July, 1784, on the south of the above, 50 acres of it on the fourth division of Nathaniel Smith's right, bought on tax sale, and 27 acres on Elijah Galusha's right, purchased of John Meacham. In February, 1785, Mr. Ballard deeded the west part of his farm to his son, John Morrow Ballard, and the east part to his son-in-law, Stephen Holt, the division line running north  $45^{\circ}$  east from three elms standing together on the bank of the river, to the north line of the 55 acre lot. He re-deeded a portion of the Clark lot to Mr. Holt in November, 1792, and gave 45 acres, lying south toward the river, to his daughter, Drusilla Holt, with whom he appears to have lived, and perhaps died, about 1795.

The "Clark lot" was sold to Col. Erwin in June, 1794, he having bought Meacham's farm of John Meacham in January previous. Mr. Holt continued to reside on the south part until May, 1801, when it was sold to Henry Ainsworth, and passed through the hands of Danforth Ainsworth and Enos Wells to Barnabas Ellis,

in November, 1813. It is now owned by Mr. Ellis' son, Zenas C. Ellis.

John Morrow Ballard sold his part to his brother-in-law, Solomon Wilder, of Whitehall, in March, 1795, and soon thereafter removed to Whitehall himself. The place is that where Charles W. Gardner now resides. John Morrow Ballard is said to have been a Methodist minister, and to have been partly of Indian blood; and beyond this we learn little or nothing of him. Jeremiah Ballard, a noted Methodist clergyman, of southern Vermont and Massachusetts, may have been a brother. He was in the town in December, 1795, when he quit-claimed to Mr. Wilder an interest in land which had been owned by Joseph Ballard. Samuel Cleveland, of Hydeville, a son of Solomon Cleveland, an intimate friend of Col. Matthew Lyon, and formerly resident in the town, relates that in his boyhood, while his father owned the mills, between 1796 and '98, he well remembers going to Mr. Holt's and hearing Lorenzo Dow preach there, Mr. Holt being known as a devoted Methodist. He also states that in that day the inhabitants were obliged to harbor or house their sheep at night to protect them from wolves, and in one instance Col. Erwin found a wolf in the pen with his sheep. The wolf had got in during the night and was unable to make his escape.

Besides these settlements, which appear to have been the earliest in the south part of the town, there were others lower down on Poultney river, which may have been of older date; as at the point where

in one body along Castleton line and river, including all that is now D. P. Wescott's and Joshua Whitlock's, extending from Elijah Estey's farm eastward to the town line, and over land lying along the river, which, it is said, in one of the early surveys, a man by the name of Azariah Blancher, or Blanchard, "once pretended to own." He gave the second division lot, No. 34, lying south of the river, to his son, Levi, August 26th, 1786, who, upon the death of his father, sold it, in March, 1795, to Cornelius and David D. Board, of Castleton, from whom it passed, in November, 1805, to Hezekiah Whitlock, the father of Joshua Whitlock, who now occupies the place.

The remainder of the estate appears to have been divided by the Court of Probate among the heirs of Mr. Trowbridge, who, besides Levi, seem to have been Mary, the wife of Ralph Carver, of Castleton; Elizabeth, the wife of Dr. Osee Dutton, of Derby, Conn.; Abigail, an unmarried daughter, who lived with Olney Hawkins; and Hannah, the wife of Olney Hawkins, who was a grand-daughter of Mr. Trowbridge.

Levi and Abigail sell the largest portion of the farm, in April, 1799, to Dr. Samuel Shaw, of Castleton, Levi retaining 52 acres on the east side adjoining the Castleton line, with the exception of one house, standing south of that in which he lived, he living not far from where Benjamin Hickock afterwards did, and the house on the south side of the road being the house which his father had occupied.

Levi sold the remaining 52 acres to Benj. Hickock, in October, 1804, and is said to have resided in the

to have been here keeping a public house when Col. Lyon came, in 1783. He was here also in 1788, when the road was re-surveyed from the bridge northward.

At the time of the survey, in 1784, Col. Lyon's house is said to have stood near the north end of the bridge, the bridge being 23 rods south, 20° west of the northeast corner of Safford's house; and Ager Hawley lived 19 rods south by 5° west of the north end of the bridge.

These houses must have stood on Col. Lyon's land, and been owned by him, the contract upon which Mr. Safford came to town not having been written, and Col. Lyon deeding him no land according to the terms of the agreement.

In the spring of 1790 Mr. Safford bought the place where John Meacham lived—now Mr. Barnes'—and removed to that part of the town, opening there a public house, which he kept for a number of years. In the spring of 1814 he sold the place to James Y. Watson, of Salem, N. Y., and bought the farm lying next north of it of the estate of Eleazer Claghorn—the same place which Meacham had sold to Col. Erwin, and he to James Claghorn. Mr. Safford conveyed it, in December, 1825, to his son Alonzo, from whom it passed through the hands of Obadiah and J. W. Eddy, Abner and Rowley R. Mead, and Andrew J. Mead to Mr. Kidder, its present owner.

Mr. Safford died on this place. He was a justice of the peace from the commencement of the town for nearly forty years, acknowledging some of the earliest deeds on record, and filled other offices of trust

The home-farm was sold by his sons, Charles and Richard, to Dr. James Witherell, in October, 1813. Witherell sold it to Peter Merritt, in January, 1815. In September, 1821, Merritt sold it to Olney Hawkins, who occupied it till May, 1827, selling it in the previous June, 1826, to Heman Stannard.

David Erwin, afterwards known as "Colonel," and later as "General" Erwin, came hither from New Jersey, soon after the completion of Col. Lyon's iron works, and probably as early as the year 1786, he being in town and witnessing to the signing of a deed in March, 1787.

He is remembered by the older inhabitants as a man of marked ability, and the efficient superintendent, or foreman, of the slitting mill. The story is told that when he came to town, then a young man, he first engaged at very small wages as "blower and striker" in the shop where Col. Lyon's chief workman was manufacturing axes, pretending not to be skilled in any of the arts of Vulcan, and so was called "Lyon's fool." After a little while, when engaged in "striking" with his "boss," he put in the interrogatory, "Why not strike there?—and again, there?" The "boss" getting impatient of the fool's impudence, as he regarded it, swore out that he might make the axe himself, he appearing to know so much; when Erwin replied that he would do so if he would suffer him to try his hand. He accordingly took the fire and anvil, and in an unusually short space of time turned out his axe, which was declared to be a handsomer, better axe than any the shop had before produced. The "boss" threw

off his apron, put on his coat and cleared the shop, calling on Col. Lyon to settle up, averring that "the fool" had outwitted him and he would no longer work.

From this time "Captain Erwin," as he was first called, came to be Col. Lyon's foremost workman. He took the freeman's oath here in September, 1788. In May, 1789, he purchased of John Meacham three acres of land, on the bank of Poultney river, in the south part of the town. The next year he bought three acres more, and in January, 1794, he bought what land Mr. Meacham then owned, situated where Asahel H. Kidder now resides. He purchased 38 acres of Stephen Holt, adjoining his farm on the west, in the June following.

He sold the whole of this, with about 36 acres more laid to him on Elijah Galusha's right—about 110 acres—in November, 1798, to Henry Ainsworth, of Pomfret, Vt. In December, he bought of Ichabod and Aaron Brownell, of Colchester, Vt., the fourth division of James Brookin's right, lying south of Mr. Leonard's, on the bank of Poultney river. He also purchased about the same time the first and fourth divisions of John Paine's right, of John Lamb and James Sharp, and 20 acres of Joel Doud. He had laid out to himself on the right of Benjamin Richardson about 60 acres, in September, 1799, and bought of Col. Lyon 28 acres more. Together these lots constituted the farm which he sold, in September, 1800, to Josiah Norton, and on which J. Wellington Estey now resides.

Col. Erwin was ordered to meet with the regiment



under his command for parade, June 9th, 1796, his regiment being in the second division of the second brigade of State militia. He was called "General" Erwin, in 1799, and appears to have left the town about 1801 or 1802, and to have gone to northern New York. He leased the splitting mill, owned by Edward Douse, of Dedham, Mass., of Mr. Douse's attorney, John Brown, in December, 1800, until February, 1802. He was one, among others, licensed to sell liquors at the June training, of 1802. *See Appendix V.*

He is said to have had two sons, Walter and Moses, while in town, and afterwards to have been himself a member, or to have had a son who was a member of the N. Y. State Senate. Further than this we learn nothing of him.

Ethan Whipple, Esq., from North Providence, R. I., was one of the new comers of this year. He was a carpenter by trade, in Rhode Island, and had been a soldier in the war of the Revolution. Here he took up a large tract of land on the rights of John and Lemuel Paine, an interest in which he had purchased as early as 1781. He built the house where John Allard now resides, and sold the same to Adams Dutton, in 1831, and removed to the west street, buying the house and lot now occupied by Charles Clyne, of Joseph Adams, and residing there till his death. He was long a prominent and influential citizen of the town.

Ashbel Clark, who is said to have resided at Mr. Merritt's and Mr. Goodrich's, and afterwards to have

away from nor injure the paper mill standing, or that may stand, opposite to said mill. Nor shall the grist mill take the water from the paper mill to injure it in its motion any time from twelve o'clock at noon to twelve o'clock at night." There is to be allowed no waste of water by leaky gates and flumes on either side. The ground in front of the mills is to be reserved as common ground for a mill yard.

At the same time he conveys to Asa Smith one and a half acres of land, on the east side of the highway, opposite the saw mill, extending in area from the river to the road leading to the forge, excepting from this the house on the east road, formerly occupied by David Erwin, and lastly by Thomas Wood; and excepting on the north and south road the place at the foot of the hill, where William Buell then resided, now Mr. Whipple's. This was conveyed back to Lyon, by Simeon Smith, in August, 1796.

In August, 1796, having re-purchased of Huffman and of Simeon Smith the mills he had sold to Huffman and Asa Smith, Col. Lyon again sells one equal half of the two mills to Solomon Cleveland, of Hampton, N. Y., Cleveland moving into town and re-building the mills, with Jonathan Orms for his millwright. Cleveland, in April, 1798, sells his equal share to Pliny Adams, of Hampton.

Col. Lyon sells one-half the saw mill, after three years time, in August, 1799, to Eliel Gilbert, of Greenfield, Mass.—a brother of Maj. Tilly Gilbert—and with it one acre of land, on the west side of the highway, above the mills, including the house in which

This six rod square piece was one of the four corners Lyon had previously deeded to the town. In December, 1801, Mr. Norton, who had purchased the second and third divisions of James Brookins' right of Col. Lyon, in November, 1800—which covered two of the six rod square corners, and came over the old highway to his west line, north of the meeting house—then re-deeded, by quit-claim, to the town, the two squares on the west, with that which was the old six rod wide highway, lying back of the old meeting house, as follows: “Beginning in the centre of the north end of the meeting house, thence east  $10^{\circ}$  south 3 rods, thence north  $10^{\circ}$  east 6 rods, thence west  $10^{\circ}$  north 12 rods, thence south  $10^{\circ}$  west 18 rods, thence east  $10^{\circ}$  south 6 rods to the highway.”

Col. Lyon, while at Philadelphia, in March, 1800, sold to Edward Douse, of Dedham, Mass., his slitting mill and iron works, and an extensive tract of land lying south and east of the river. In November he closed off to Mr. Norton what remained to him in the town, including the saw mill on the Upper Falls, at the expiration of Scott & Lyon's lease.

Mr. Norton takes up his residence, in 1800, in the house built by James Lyon, east of the church, where he succeeds Lyon as post-master, and also keeps a small stock of merchandise for sale. This same year he buys an extensive tract of land of Col. David Erwin—Col. Erwin's farm, on the plain, toward Mr. Leonard. He was chosen town clerk in 1801, re-elected in 1802 and '03, but he fell down and died suddenly, of apoplexy, or disease of the heart, in March 1803, when

men, Joseph, Harmon and John P.—came hither in the year 1798, taking up his abode on the land which he purchased, in part, of his father, in May, 1804, and partly of his father's heirs, in December, 1806. Having married Diadama Preston, of Poultney, in the year 1800, he first settled in a log house nigh where John D. Wood now resides, afterward building him a frame house on the place which he occupied so many years, and where his son, Harmon, has recently erected a new residence.

Ethiel Perkins, of Derby, Conn., December, 1795, bought of Levi Trowbrige, of Fair Haven, the second division of Oliver Sanford's right, in the north part of the town. In 1798, he bought of Moses Sheldon, of Rupert, the second and third divisions of Jacob Ruback's right which laid just north of the farm which Oliver Proctor so long owned and occupied. In March, 1799, he bought of Beriah Rogers the place on which Mr. Proctor died, and there made his home for some years, selling the place, in 1806, to his son, Roger Perkins. He is said to have been a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and to have been deranged after he came to Fair Haven. He died here in 1826.

Among those who had been resident in the town from an earlier period, there were various changes, some of which have been already indicated in these pages. Beriah Rogers had bought south of the village, in 1797. Col. David Erwin, who had bought of John Meacham and Stephen Holt, in the south part of the town, and sold out to Henry Ainsworth, in November, 1798, had purchased, in December of the same year, the lands toward Mr. Leonard's, of Messrs.

Brownell, of Colchester, and John Lamb, of Fair Haven—the same he sold, in 1800, to Josiah Norton, Esq.

Jeremiah Durand had sold off portions of his farm to William Buell and Charles Boyle, and had died prior to 1799.

Israel Trowbridge had also died, and his son, Levi, had sold, in March, 1795, the second division of his father's original right—the farm on which Hezekiah Whitlock afterward settled—to Cornelius and David D. Board, of Castleton. In the spring of 1799, Levi and Abigail, his sister, had given Dr. Samuel Shaw, of Castleton, a deed of a large part of their home-farm—now D. P. Wescott's place—reserving only a small portion along Castleton town line. A man by the name of Content Allis occupied Shaw's portion, toward Kelsey's, about one year. Shaw sold the place in the summer of 1800, to Jacob Slyter, sometimes written "Slaughter," of Poultney.

On the west street, Frederick Hill, who had a place just east of Isaac Cutler's—perhaps where Rev. Rufus Cushman afterwards resided, now John P. Sheldon's—and was town clerk in 1791, removed, as we have seen, to Rutland, leaving the place to Mr. Cutler. Beyond Esquire Cutler's, besides Dr. Witherell, there were Charles Rice, Capt. Elijah Taylor, John W. Throop, Abijah Warren, Olney Hawkins, John Brown and Nathaniel Dickinson, all owners of real estate during this period. These seem to comprise the principal points and incidents of change during the period.

In the public transactions of the town there are several facts deserving of mention and record. At

then stood. On the 30th of April, 1862, Mr. Ludlum transferred the premises to his father-in-law, Augustus Graves, of Salisbury, and Mr. Graves immediately erected the building now standing on the corner, and occupied by his son, for a store, on the land of the old roadway at the east end of the store built by Mr. Williams, afterwards removing the same to the present corner, and placing the old part farther to the east and south, and at the same time extending the north wing of his dwelling house.

Simeon Allen sold the north house and lot to Norman Peck, of Hampton, in January, 1866, and Mr. Peck soon after erected on this lot the building now used as the printing office of the *Fair Haven Journal*.

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## THE IRON WORKS.

Col. Matthew Lyon built the dam on the Upper Falls, to bring water to his iron works, in July, 1785. He must have built the works during the season, bringing his machinery on wagons from Massachusetts. In October he petitioned the General Assembly of the State, which was then an independent sovereignty, to lay a duty of 2d. per pound on nails coming

into the State, to enable him to build his works and supply the State. The town was called "Lyon's Works," and known for some years after this time, in the whole country around, by this designation.

The iron business was carried on here by Col. Lyon under various superintendents—Gen. David Erwin being remembered as for a number of years the managing foreman, or boss—until Lyon's removal to Kentucky, in 1800. The business appears to have been partly the manufacture of axes, hoes, and various agricultural implements, but mainly the making of iron from the ore imported from abroad, into nail rods, the rods being manufactured into nails by hand. It was not until several years later that machinery was invented to cut the nails directly from the rolled plates.

Col. Lyon is reported to have kept a large number of men in employment about his works. In January, 1794, he sold to William Hennessy the two south fires in his forge, together with a hammer, anvil and coal house. Mr. Hennessy failed, and the forge fires were taken possession of by Abraham Leggett, of New York, in April, 1798, under an attachment. They came into the hands of William Lee, of Poultney, in August, 1799, and he sold them to Alexander Dunehue, of Castleton, in March, 1804. Dunehue sold them to Cornelius D. Board, of Castleton, in April. Board sold them to Salmon Norton, in April, 1805, and in April, 1808, Norton sold them to Jacob Davey.

Col. Lyon, having decided to leave Vermont, sold the works, while at Philadelphia, in March, 1800, to Edward Douse, of Dedham, Mass., selling with them

all the land lying south of the road running past the works and east of the turnpike, and the extensive tract afterward purchased by Jacob Davey, lying south and eastward from the river.

The slitting mill was leased by John Brown, attorney for Mr. Douse, on the 25th of December, 1800, to David Erwin, until the 15th of February, 1802, Erwin to pay for the use of the same in iron rods as fast as they were manufactured, but Erwin does not appear to have retained it; and Mr. Douse leased the works to Dan Smith, of West Haven, in July, 1801. Mr. Smith started the works and finally purchased them of Douse, in July, 1803. In October, 1807, Jacob Davey, who had come into town in the spring of 1804, and taken charge of the works for Mr. Smith, purchased them of Smith, with the six acres of land extending westward to the turnpike. He also leased for seven years the 300 acres east and south of the river, with the privilege of buying, and in June, 1812, purchased the same.

The works were burned down in November, 1815, and re-built by Mr. Davey. In May, 1829, Mr. Davey sold one-half interest in the works to Edmund Kingsland, Jonathan Capen and Jacob D. Kingsland, and they took charge of the business, making \$500 each in the first six months and losing what they had made in the second six months. Mr. Capen and Jacob Kingsland sold to Edmund Kingsland in the spring of 1831. Mr. Capen hired the works one year, in 1832, and made \$1,000 in running them. Mr. Kingsland



Thomas Ranney, and resided on her place, where J. H. Williams' store now is.

He died, at the West, February 1st, 1865, and was brought back to Fair Haven and buried.

His family by his first wife were :

*Jane, Henry, James, Abigail, Horace, Mary, and Frank.*

JOHN W. DEWEY, b. in Royalton, Vt., in 1794 ; m. Sarah Hamlin in 1823 ; d. November, 1862. He came to Fair Haven to reside, in 1838, having previously resided ten years in Hubbardton, and two years in Castleton. He built a house adjoining the old burying ground, on the east, where his widow and family still reside.

His children are :

1. *Julia H.*, b. in 1825 ; m. in 1846, to Geo. W. Hurlburt, and have two children, Edward C., and Frank W.

2. *Marcus B.*, b. in 1830 ; m. Lucy S. Allen, in 1853.

3. *Hamlin T.*, b. 1840 ; resides with his mother.

4. *Ellen F.*, b. 1836 ; d. 1837.

ELI and AMBROSE EVARTS ; see p. 45.

COL. DAVID ERWIN ; see p. 65.

ELINUS ELLIS was here and took the freeman's oath in 1809.

BARNABAS ELLIS, the son of Barnabas Ellis and Elizabeth Spencer, and the seventh of ten children, was born January 1st, 1785. He married Belinda Kidder, and established himself, for a time, in the harness making business in Weathersfield, Vt. He re-

## REMONSTRANCE OF BENONI HURLBURT.

*Whereas*, It appears that one certain Joseph Carver, a transient person, said to be an inhabitant of the State of Rhode Island, not having the fear of God before his eyes, without my consent, by a petition signed by himself and others, made use of my name, which I aver to be without the least knowledge or consent of mine, which is not only against my will but against my interests, I do hereby remonstrate against any act or thing being done in answer to said petition, and I further declare that I do not hold my interest in said town by virtue of possession only, but by virtue of the grant made to proprietors, who have not disturbed me in my improvements, but otherwise, have granted me the privilege of covering and retaining my possession.

Given under my hand at Cheshire, this 26th day of May, 1782.

BENONI HURLBURT.

## APPENDIX V.

## LICENSE FOR RETAILING LIQUORS, JUNE 14th, 15th, AND 16th, 1802.

At a meeting of the Civil Authority and Selectmen of the town of Fair Haven, for the purpose of giving license to persons to mix and sell strong liquors . . . on the 14th, 15th, and 16th of this instant, June, in order to accommodate the persons attending the Regimental Review in said Fair Haven, agreeably to an act of the General Assembly, passed at Vergennes, in Nov., 1798; accordingly there is hereby licensed for the purpose aforesaid, Josiah Norton, Tilly Gilbert, Wm. Hawkins, Olney Hawkins, Isaac Cutler, Philip Allen, David Erwin, Ira Durand, Curtis Kelsey, Jr., and Paul Scott.

*Fair Haven, 8th June, 1802.*

J. WITHERELL, Judge; JOSIAH NORTON, Justice Peace; ETHAN WHIPPLE, Justice Peace; SAMUEL STANNARD, TILLY GILBERT, Selectmen, WM. HAWKINS, Grand Juror; NATHANIEL DICKINSON, Constable.

## REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TOWN IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

Matthew Lyon, 1783, '84, 1787, '88, 1790, '91, 1793, '94, '95, '96.

\*Simeon Smith, 1789, '92, '97,

James Witherell, 1798, '99, 1800, '01, '02.

\*Oliver Church, 1803, '06, '07, 1810, '11, 1819.

Isaac Cutler, 1804, '05.

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\* Belonged in West Haven.